a miscellany of Fortean curiosites

The News

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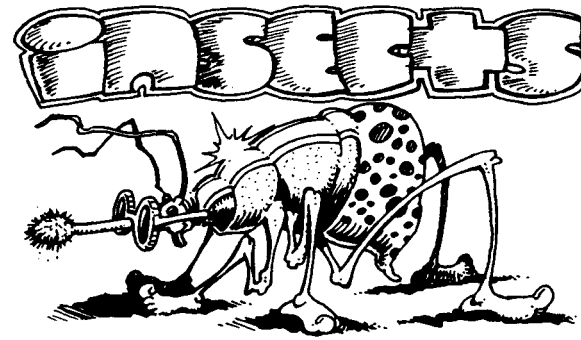


A MILLION MAD BEES ON THE ATTACK.

Mrs Judith Reed was clearing away after lunch, about 2.30, when there was a loud buzzing, and her home in Rensselaer County, Indiana, was plunged into a dark "gloom". Calling to her children to stay indoors, she found bees crawling thickly on her kitchen window. "There were thousands of them...the brilliant sunshine was blocked out. Their buzzing seemed to fill the inside of the house." They had pets in the garden and managed to catch glimpses of huge "fighting-mad" clouds of bees "dive-bombing the geese and chickens, and there was nothing we could do but watch them die in agony." Her husband was at work, so she called the police - but when a car pulled into her drive, the two officers were as trapped as she was. In fact the bees swarmed so thickly around the car that they dared not back out - they were stuck there for at least 2½ to 3 hours. One officer said that the bees actually seemed to be deliberately attacking them.

Then as suddenly as they came, they flew off. "The silence was electrifying, and the sense of relief undescribable," said Mrs Reed. A local pest exterminator blamed the curious behaviour on the stifling heat. On searching the Reed's attic, he found a hive an astonishing 18ft long, which must have contained, he reckoned, over a million bees. "It took five gallons of insecticide to wipe them out." The temperature outside was 97°F, but neared 120°F inside the hive. Sunday Express, 21 Sept 75. Cr: S Moore & R Randle.

...AND SOME ON THE WAY...

Curiously the above incident has nothing to do with vast swarms of killer African Bees that are threatening to invade the USA. In 1956, professor of genetics Warrick Kerr was working on crossbreeding with the local bees to improve honey production in São Paulo. Then 26 African queens (and their swarms) escaped -- and as usual in escapes of imported animals, they bred prolifically, virtually wiping out the local bees and spreading at the rate of 200 miles a year, much to the chagrin of US observers, northwards from Brazil. Daily Express, 19 June 75,

reported that the National Academy of Sciences in Washington were already debating ideas like traps across Central Mexico, aerial spray and poison networks, or dumping millions of non-aggressive bees in their path in the hope they'd make love not war.

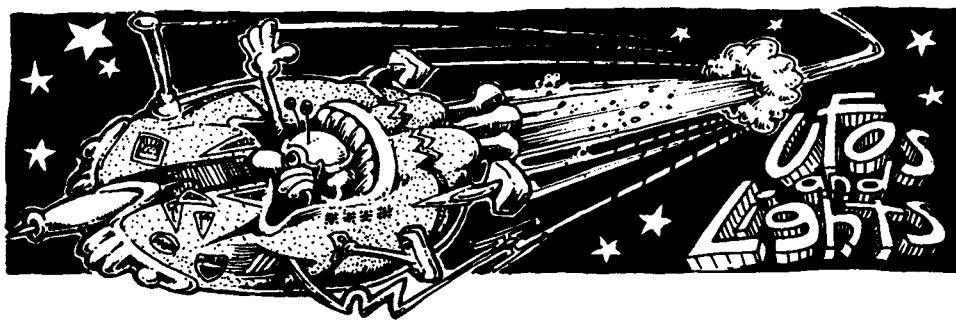
Human deaths have varied in accounts from "dozens" to "300" (Daily Mail, 15 April 75). The first ones were in Brazil in 1966; the next year a man died in Rio de Janeiro from "1000 stings" (Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph, 21 May 75). Since then, tney have been on a rampage of death, with animal victims numbered in the thousands. Already Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela have felt their sting. The US government is obviously taking the threat that the killer bees will reach them by 1980 very seriously -- $125,000 has been allocated by the US Agricultural Department for a study of the bees, and a call has gone out to Mexico, Canada and Central American countries to cooperate in quelling the hazard. (Compiled from contributions by Steve Moore & Nigel Watson.)

...MEANWHILE, DOWN IN KENT...

A letter to Sunday Times, 3 Aug 75:

"Sir - I have not seen a single bee in our area of Kent this year. I don't know whether this is just local, but if it is general it could become very serious ecologically with a disastrous effect on the food chain.

FMD Robertson, Sundridge, Kent."



A COUPLE OF OLDIES...

...which we don't recall recording at the time. A bright bluish-green light, which may or may not have been a fireball (whatever they are) was seen "on numerous occasions" as it passed over Abernyte, Pitlochry, Longforgan, and Madderly, all in Perthshire, about 9pm, 27 Dec 73. One witness said: "A bright burning object like a huge firework descended from the sky. Streamers of fire licked from it, and it was brighter than my car headlights. It filtered itself out and appeared to drop over the Crieff Road area of Perth." Perthshire Advertiser, 29 Dec 73.

In the week or so prior to this, there seems to have been a mini-flap in the Epping area of Essex, as we learn from the Epping & Ongar West Essex Gazette, 4 Jan 74. Caroline Ebborn, a designer, was visiting her sister in Abridge when she saw a "mysterious array of lights" pass high over her head. There was a plane in the sky and the two were completely dissimilar. "It started off as a red pulsating ball near the moon, then started to rise. It became paler, then turned towards me at remarkable speed." She described it as diamond-shapedwith bright yellow lights on two opposite points, and "neon-red lines" at the back. Later, it turned a pale fluorescent green. That evening, two persons saw something similar over Epping. Several days later, an object with "incredibly blue lights whirling around a red one" moved fast, silently and smoothly over Buckhurst Hill in the direction of the forest. Unfortunately, we have no precise dates, but these should be accessible to a little poking around. (Cr: UFORC.)

A ROUND-UP OF RECENT SIGHTINGS.

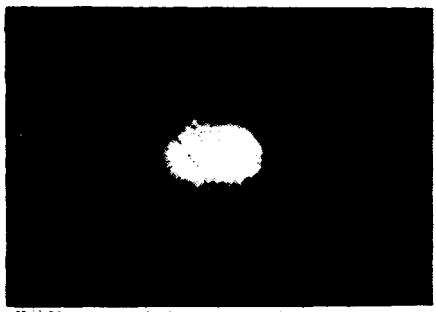
Night-duty officers at the Heston fire station, Middlesex, claim to have seen flying saucer-like objects. Daily Mirror, 11 June 75.

Mystery lights over Aughton, Lancs, 16th June, mystified lunchtime visitors to the Tower Restaurant on Liverpool's St John's Beacon. They flashed as they periodically "descended to the ground" and were visible for several minutes around 1.45pm. A housewife in Wirral, Cheshire, that evening said she saw a rapidly moving bright object cross the sky in the direction of Warrington. Liverpool Echo, 17 & 18 June 75. Cr: AF Ashcroft.

Arthur Wherrett of Lown Hill, Acomb, Yorks, saw a disc-shaped object giving off a bright light as it headed north, noiselessly, about 11.30pm, 10th Aug. Through his binoculars he saw that it was travelling slowly and jerkily at about 2000 ft. The night before, a man at Gower Walk, Hartlepool, Cleveland, reported a bright light outside his bedroom window at about 2.30am. A policeman also reported a bright light in the sky that night.

Two schoolboys in Middlesborough, Yorks, said they saw lights; and the Cleveland UFO Research Group said they had reports of sightings along the coast from Saltburn to Redcar. Yorkshire Evening Press, 11 Aug 75. Cr: JW Scaife.

The photo below, taken by professional photographer Chris Waller, was the highlight (literally!) of a skywatch held at Cradle and Starr Hills, Warminster, Wilts, over the weekend 29/30 August. It was one of nine lights seen by many observers at Starr Hill in the space of an hour. They were orange or reddish and bobbed "elegantly" above the treeline for several seconds. Southern Evening Echo, 2 Sept 75. Cr: Roger Randle.



No, it's not a hole in the paper—it's what the photographer saw at Starr Hill, Warminster.

KEN ROGERS - SCAREMONGER EXTRAORDINARY!

Fresh from provoking the soggy vengence of Hampstead's rain-god (see NEWS 12/7), Ken has been poking his finger at the Hampshire skies.

On the 12th Sept, 5 boys fishing at Burghfield Bridge, Holybrook, Berks, saw a white light that descended to the ground, then rose up in a red flash. Suddenly there were six or seven of them. Earlier that evening, Mrs Carol Ward of Island Farm Road, Ufton Nervet, saw eight lights in the sky, from Earley, Reading, like "a train in the distance"; they remained stationary for a time then moved off in the direction of Winnersh. (Reading) Evening Post, 15 Sept 75.

Two days later, the (Reading) Evening Post revealed that Ken's British UFO Society had taken an interest in the activity around Reading. Other sightings alluded to (ie. no details given) were: 2 schoolboys seeing a light over Caversham, and a Wokingham woman seeing a "bell-shaped" object hovering over Winnersh, both toward the end of August; a Reading boy spotted a "ball of fire" over the town, and a Wokingham couple saw a "glowing orange ball" a few days later over Twyford, both about mid Sept.

On October 31st, the Basingstoke Gazette gave a full page to the British UFO Society, the subject in general, and in particular Ken's prediction that more UFOs will be seen in the Basingstoke area. Why? Because it's in the middle of a UFO flight path that takes in the Thames Estuary and Warminster, not forgetting Stonehenge. The article also revealed that a lady in Little Basing saw a light in the sky that did antics, "recently"; and that there was another sighting over Reading the week before (the article). Whether it's deliberate or not, Ken's getting some amazing publicity for the BUFOS. Probe behind the reports of most sightings, it seems, and there is Ken beaming all over his face.

It is an experiment (deliberate or not) that would have met with Fort's approval. Point to an area - any area - and predict UFOs, or unicorns, anything, as long as it is publicised - and see what transpires (though I guess many people in Hampstead are beginning to think Ken pushed things a little too far.)

The same paper a week later, reveals that a Miss Ruth Rees, of Contact, saw a ball of orange light over Stratfield Turgis, two weeks before, and near the Duke of Wellington's estate of Stratfield Saye, between Reading and Basingstoke, and of which Miss Rees is the park manager. One unfortunate quote from Miss Rees is: "I believe in the facts. I'm anxious to get the subject away from the nasty psychic image that it has."

Further letters on the subject, including a sighting by two brothers on the evening of the 27th Oct, over Basingstoke, appear in the Basingstoke Gazette, 14 Nov 75. That is all to our press date - but we will be keeping an eye on the area.

THE RIDDLE OF THE VANISHING WOODSMAN.

As we go to press, an astonishing UFO-kidnap story has broken. We use the description lightly, bearing in mind all the paradoxes involved in the questionable existence of solid craft from other star-systems.

Most papers around 10 & 11 th Nov carried the story that forestry worker Travis Walton and five workmates were driving back from trimming trees in the Sitgreave-Apache National Forest, near Snowflake, Arizona, when the crew-boss, Mike Rogers, braked the truck. Hovering 15ft above the trees was a flying saucer. Despite shouted warnings, Walton jumped out and ran towards it. Suddenly, there was a brilliant blue and white flash and Walton crumpled to the ground. The others panicked and drove off -- when they returned for Walton, both he and the object were gone. This happened on the night of 5th Nov, and in the following five days a massive hunt scoured the countryside for any sign of him. On the fifth day, Travis Walton turned up, gaunt, hungry, 10lbs lighter and talking of capture by an alien race.

We take our details from the Daily Express, 15 Nov 75 (Cr: Steve Moore & Mike Rickard.)-- doubtless investigations are at present under way, and we look forward to the reports in the UFO media. The Daily Express item contains several interesting statements: there is the description of the zapping of Walton by Mike Rogers, who says the flash was green-

ish-blue and had affected their eyes when they later stopped a quarter of a mile away to look back; and there is the statement from Marlin Gillespie, the Navajo County Sheriff who says Walton's workmates all made apparently true statements under his lie-detector. But, most interesting of all is a lengthy interview with Walton himself, and which for lack of space we condense here:

"We all saw the saucer that night. I knew what it was right away. When Duane (his brother) was a kid he was followed by a saucer and we promised each other that if it happened again I would not be afraid...I just jumped out and ran towards the glow. I felt no fear. I got close and something hit me...like an electric blow to my jaw...I fell backwards and everything went black...When I woke there was a strong light...I had problems focussing and pains in my chest and head...I was on a table...I saw three weird figures...not human ...tney looked like well-developed foetuses, about 5ft tall, in tan-brown robes, tight-fitting. Their skins were mushroom-white, with no clear features. They made no sound. They had no hair, their foreheads were domed and their eyes very large...I panicked...jumped up knocking over a plastic tray...I wanted to attack them but they scampered away...a man appeared a few feet away...human, in helmet and tight-fitting blue uniform...he smiled at me and led me through a corridor into another big, bright room...a planetarium. Outside it was dark but I recognised some galaxies... (then Walton fiddles with some buttons on the arm of a chair, and gets frightened he might destroy the craft when the scene 'outside' changes as he fiddles)... the man in blue re-appeared...led me down a ramp, suddenly I was in bright sunlight...some kind of hangar. I saw some small space saucers nearby. Then I saw 3 other people (in helmets). They were human, one a woman, all dressed in blue... They took me to a table and eased me on it. They put a mack on my face...then things went black again... When I woke up I was shaky... on the highway. The trees were lit up because their saucer was just a few feet away. I saw nobody...I ran until I came to a phone booth. I recognised I was in Heber (a few miles from Snowflake)...I phoned my sister, and they came to get me."

Many elements of this story fit the pattern of contactee experiences generally and I can only refer interested readers to Jerry Clark and Loren Coleman's excellent discussion of this pattern in their recent US paperback The Unidentified (see review last issue). Those who have already read it will recognise some of those elements: the alternating periods of bright lignt and darkness that might be an analogue of the passage of time elapsed in the 'kidnapping'; the entry into and exit from the experience via unconsciousness; the 1+3 and 1+1 motifs (the symbols 2 and 4 of the square-symbol of psychic-integration); the transformation of the 3 foetuses into 3 humans (with the feminine anima component); the vision of the cosmos and the fear that tampering with the equipment could destroy it (Faust and the modern dilemma in a nutshell); his psychic immaturity showing up as impotence in the experience ("I guess I was angry most of the time. I just wasn't able to communicate with them. If only they'd answered my questions "); the fact that he went voluntarily into the experience minimised his resistance to the force of the dissociation, so that he was able to emerge without burns, wounds, paralysis or any other subjective confirmation of his inability to integrate the elements of his psyche; and lastly, probably of critical importance to the shape of his experience, the fact that he had some background in the folklore of the subject (ie the UFO as passed into popular vocabulary) and some expectation (his promise to his brother) of the experience.

Doubtless there are some readers who will agree with Miss Rees' statement (p4) about getting the subject of UFOs away from all this "nasty psychic" stuff. To be fair, there are theories and theories, but sheer logical sensibility demands greater credence to the theory that 'includes' (not necessarily explains) the greatest variety of phenomena. We must bear in mind Fort's dictum about substituting 'acceptance' for 'belief' -- and thus only accept a theory until a better (ie more complete or inclusive) comes along. Only one obstacle to our subjective experience theory -- and that is, just where was Travis Walton during the five-day search... on a saucer, teleported elsewhere for the duration, jumped 'up the line' in time, or maybe somnambulating around that (large) forest while his conscious mind, divorced from its more artificial functions, was locked in deep communion with the symbolic processes that are all we can ever know of the collective unconscious? Who knows?

On The Slope Of Silbury Hill

Stuart W Greenwood

Silbury Hill is the largest man-made mound in Europe. Located close to the A4 roadway between Bristol and London, the present writer observed it from the road perhaps a hundred times in his early life with no more than passing curiosity. But now it takes on fresh and stimulating significance.

In an earlier article (1) it was suggested that Egypt and Britain were linked in an important way in early times, part of the stimulus for this argument being suggested by the correspondence of the slopes of some of the larger Egyptian pyramids with the latitudes of Britain, and part being the indications of some alignments of tumuli and other earthworks centred on Stonehenge.

Ivimy (2) independently developed similar and additional arguments; his studies including references to Silbury Hill.

The contours of Silbury Hill are a little irregular, but essentially it is a circular mound with a flat top and having sides sloping at a mean angle of 30 degrees (3). Ivimy refers to radiocarbon dating of Silbury Hill at 2145 BC ± 95 years and to the more recent adjustments based on bristlecone pine studies that would modify this to a central date of 2745 BC. As pointed out by Ivimy, such dating is subject to further adjustment, but it may be reasonable to consider Silbury Hill to be roughly contemporary with, if not slightly earlier than, the early pyramid builders of Egypt.

We now put our treatment of the significance of pyramid slope into operation once more and apply it to Silbury Hill. If a slope of 30 degrees were to indicate an important site in the Northern Hemisphere, where would we expect to find it? The answer, of course, is at latitude 30 degrees, and the site, by reciprocal application of our earlier arguments, would be in Egypt. The solution is simple: Giza.

For good measure, the sarsen stones at Stonehenge were taken from the region of Avebury, adjacent to Silbury Hill, and itself the site of a major stone ring. Any questions?

+++ +++ +++ +++ +++ +++

References:

1) Stuart W. Greenwood, 'Pyramid Slope and Northern Latitudes', NEWS 9/12.
2) John Ivimy, 'The Sphinx and the Megaliths', Turnstone, 1974.
3) Andrew Davidson, 'Silbury Hill', contribution to 'Britain: A Study in Patterns', a publication of the Research into Lost Knowledge Organisation, 1971.

Stuart W. Greenwood: August 1975.

Silbury Hill as surveyed by JW Brooke, Marlborough District Surveyor (from 3). Reproduced by kind permission of the Research into Lost Knowledge Trust

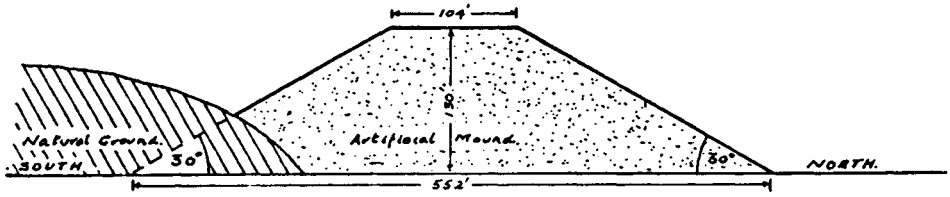
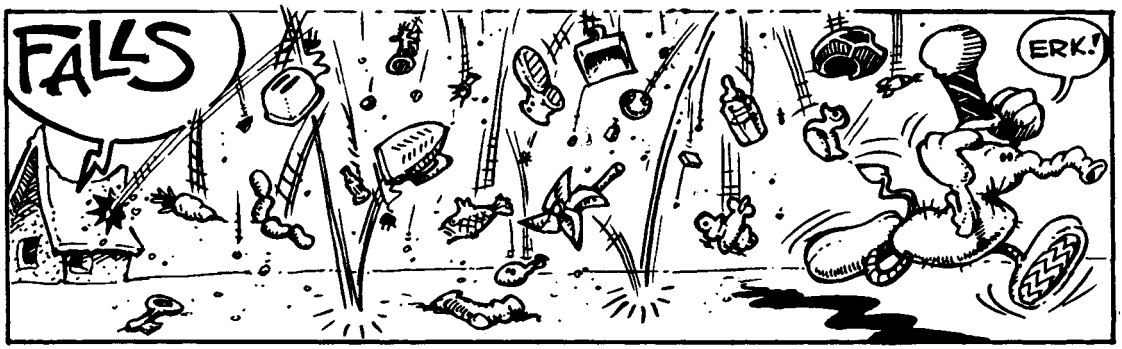


Figure 1. SILBURY HILL
Meridian Section South-North, with measurements as given to Mr. Cotsworth by Mr. J. W. Brooke, Surveyor.
Scale — 1:1250. Redrawn Feb. '70. ©



SHOWERS OF FROGS?

The following article appeared in the Eastern Daily Press, 11 July 75, by their regular contributor, EA Ellis.

"Following heavy rain yesterday (11th July) a friend living at Brundall reported the appearance of hundreds of young frogs or toads all over his lawn (he described them as dark brown so they were probably toadlets). This was on high ground, some distance from the nearest pond. It was tempting to assume that these young creatures had arrived in a shower from the sky, but the explanation, at least in most cases of sudden swarming after rain, is that the young amphibians, having migrated from the water where they developed as tadpoles, tend to remain under the cover of grass and other herbage by day and move only at night, but are tempted out of cover at any time by a heavy shower.

"Nowadays I find that most authorities on the amphibia tend to avoid references to showers of frogs and toads, but the subject has often been debated fiercely by naturalists in the past. I think it very unlikely that the alleged phenomena occurs at all frequently, but having myself seen a variety of objects sucked up in waterspouts and whirlwinds on several occasions, and having also been at the receiving end of the material showered down afterwards, I see no reason to discredit every tale of froglets descending from the air. The most convincing incident of this brought to my notice by two friends whom I fully believed, concerned a shower of frogs which descended on top of a loaded hay wagon nearby, at the same time, during a cloudburst." -- EAE.

This attracted the attention of two of our readers, Nigel Watson, and RTA Hill. The article brought a few letters in succeeding issues, and Nigel secured us permission to reproduce them here. Ron Hill wrote a letter to the paper putting frog-falls in the general picture of Fortean records of all manner of animals that have dropped from skies all over the world. He attempted, too, to counter the ideas that frog-falls were rare, and attributable to whirlwinds. To the efforts of these gentlemen, and the helpfulness of PJ Roberts, Editor of the EDP, we are indebted for the opportunity to record these East Anglia frog-falls.

EDP: 15 July 75.

"Sir - When a girl at school during the summer holidays, I used to help cart the corn from the field to the stackyard. On one occasion I had just arrived at the field with my empty waggon, when a storm broke. The men and I ran for shelter. When we returned to the waggon the bottom was covered with tiny frogs. The men scooped them up on a sack and carried them to the verge of the field. - - Yours faithfully , RE Spinks (Mrs. Aged 82.)
Bean Vista, Kimberley Green."

EDP: 19 July 75.

"Sir - Mrs RE Spinks' letter in today's EDP is quite remarkable; the more so as it is not without precedent. In a letter dated 24th October 1683, John Collinges wrote to Sir Henry Hobart as follows:

'The other (piece of news) is more strange, brought by one Gargrave, a good sober fellow that collects the hearth money. Being last week at Acle, the innkeeper told him the night before, most of their houses were filled with greate toads so as he gathered them up with shovels and threw them into the fire for the stench he could hardly abide in the house, the rest he threw into a yard. Next morning they were all gone. They talk how that they came down in a shower.' From the Historical Manuscripts Commission report re. the Marquess of Lothian MSS, preserved at Blickling Hall.

The only explanation that occurs to me is that of another local phenomenon known as a 'water-spout' where, in rare climatic conditions, water was seen to be sucked up into the atmosphere. Of this there are several recorded eye-witness accounts.

Yours faithfully, RC Fiske.
26 Yarmouth Rd, North Walsham."

Whaaat! A water-spout breaking inside a house? The way I read it is that these non-

paying ~~£s.d.~~ pests somehow appeared inside the houses - if so this is the first such case to my knowledge, and is quite remarkable. Can anyone help follow this up? - Ed.

EDP: 19 JULY 75.

"Sir - It was with interest that I read Mrs RE Spinks' letter, as I experienced the same thing in the 1940s. We were farming at the time, carting and stacking the wheat, when a thunderstorm broke out. We hastily covered the stack (about 10ft high) with the stack-cloth and ran for shelter. When the storm was over and the sun came out again, we took the cloth off the stack and it was covered with little frogs.

Yours faithfully, D Slack (Mrs).
Great Plumstead, Norwich."

Its not quite clear here whether the frogs were on the cloth, or on the stack under the cloth - Ed.

EDP: 26 July 75.

"Sir - I was interested in the letters about the showers of frogs. Many years ago a friend of mine, Mr Loft Durrant of Reedham, told me he was helping with the hay on the marshes near Reedham Ferry, when suddenly a storm came up and they went to shelter. When they came back the ground was covered with frogs and natterjack toads.

Yours faithfully, HJ Walpole.
30 St Mary's Close, Hemsby."

At this point the Editor of the EDP tried to close the correspondence- saying that "at times East Anglia must have been thickly carpeted with these amphibians from the sky!" The last letters to appear on the subject were the following, and Ron Hill's defence.

EDP: 30 JULY 75.

"Sir - Reading your footnote to Mr Walpole's letter on Saturday, I feel you are a little sceptical and think perhaps that my late old friend, Mr Loff ((sic)) Durrant was stretching it a little. At this time (1920) I was employed on Reedham swing-bridge, and an old resident, Mr Dan Prettyman, now dead, told me the marsh between the bridge and the ferry was covered with frogs. 'There were hundreds and thousands,' said Dan. I did not see them myself, but the noise they made after dark could be heard all over the village and beyond. The mist rising from the marshes and the eerie experience remains with me to this day.

Yours faithfully, WS Rouse.
36 Bradfield Road, North Walsham."

This to me seems to offer some evidence for the fall theory. A gathering of frogs that large would take several days to accumulate, and there would have been many witnesses to the migration. Besides, if the huge number of frogs were merely "under the cover of grass and other herbage" as mentioned by EAE, they would have sounded off on previous nights too. Perhaps, since it seems that despite many witnesses after the event, no one saw them actually fall, we can only honestly say that in this case large numbers of frogs appeared during a storm. This suggests an affinity with poltergeist apports - and may render the appearance of frogs inside a house more of a probability. This, of course, explains nothing.

CARDAN'S THEORY OF FROG-FALLS.

In our very first issue, we published a letter from Mrs Sylvia Mowday, recounting her experience of a frog-fall (they fell quite visibly in her vicinity) in Sutton Park, Birmingham, on 12 June 1954 (see NEWS 1/8). Later she wrote again, saying that she had discovered a reference in Izaak Walton's The Compleat Angler, Ch 8 (see NEWS 3/10), saying that some frogs breed by eggs; " and others...by the slime and dust of the earth, and that in winter they turn to slime again, and that next summer that very slime returns to be a living creature; this is the opinion of Pliny; and Cardanus undertakes to give a reason for the raining of frogs..." What, Mrs Mowday asked, was Cardan's reason for the raining of frogs?

We attempted to trace this reference to the 19th Book of Jerome Cardan's De Subtilitate , but it was unavailable, even in Birmingham's excellent reference library. However, not long ago we were browsing in an old encyclopedia, bought in a secondhand bookshop for the illustrations, and it actually fell open at a passage that discussed Cardan's theory. It is as follows:

"As far back as the epoch of the Renaissance, a celebrated physician, Cardan, who brought out so many strange hypotheses, nevertheless hit upon the truth in respect to this phenomenon ((frog-falls - Ed.)) He supposed that the showers of frogs were to be attributed to water-spouts which carried these animals off from the mountains, and let them fall at some distance, when they burst."

So there you have it -- Cardan, writing in about 1549, was the originator of the modern scientist's get-out theory. For our part we admit that some frogs have fallen by whirlwinds - others have been seen falling with no whirlwind about.

SOME USA FROG-FALLS.

While we're about it, we have a clipping sent by Lucius Parish, of a 'Dear Abby' column, from the Camden (Ark.) News, 2 Jan 1973, which contains the following letters:

"In the summer of 1926, I caddied at a local golf course. There had been a long drought that summer and the fairways were brown and dried up. One afternoon, a sudden storm came up and a terrific thundershower followed. Rain came down in torrents, and with it, a shower of tiny frogs about the size of nickels. They were alive and jumping - thousands of them. The golfers and I

couldn't believe our eyes as we watched thousands of frogs come right down with the rain from the sky. - WA Walker, Evansville, Indiana."

"I was raised on a farm in Minnesota, and as a boy I remember a storm coming up. It looked serious, so we ran to the cellar. In 40 minutes it was over. Afterwards we went outside and saw our chickens going wild - eating tiny frogs and fishes. - FJ McManus, Laguna Beach, California."

"I personally drove through a 'rainstorm' of tadpoles in western Missouri, 14 years ago. - (?) Dodge City, Kansas."

"About 35 years ago while I was driving through a thunderstorm near Hershey, Pa., dozens of tiny frogs came down and pelted the hood of my automobile. - DE Garner, Baltimore, Maryland."

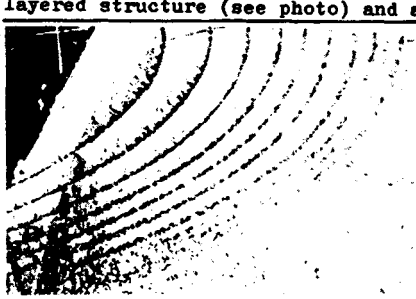
...AND...

Hundreds of frogs rained into the streets of Istanbul, on 17 June 1969. A 'freak wind' was blamed as picking them out of a nearby lake. Daily Mirror, 18 June 69. Cr: A Smith.

MANCHESTER - ICE BLOCK.

Early in 1973, if Charles Fort had been around, he would have been scrabbling for his scissors, or a scrap of paper to note on, and perhaps scooting his chair over to a fresh edge of carpet to prize out a tack to pin the two together. A strolling meteorologist nearly got clobbered by a chunk of ice falling from the sky. As chunks go, it was modest - an estimated 1 to 2 kilograms (apx 3½lbs). Fort notes a monster of over 20ft diameter (between ½ to 1 ton) that fell at Ord, in Scotland, in 1849 - Book of the Damned, Ch13. But there is no doubt that this latest fall is among the best of all corroborated cases.

The story in essence is this: on Monday 2 April 1973, RF Griffiths was at the junction of Buttesford Aveenue and Burton Road, Manchester (N.Grid.Ref: SJ839922) when "a large object struck the road, about 3 metres to my left front. The object fell fast enough to be shattered into many pieces on impact. The time was 2003GMT." Griffiths picked up the largest of the many pieces (weighing 612gms, and 14cm on its longest axis.) On holding it up to a street-light, he saw a clearly defined layered structure (see photo) and anxious to preserve it ran off into the night with his booty. Less than 10 minutes later it was safe in the freezer of his house, and later taken to a laboratory in Manchester University.



51 "rings of clear ice alternating with rings of bubbles trapped in the structure." Photo from N Sci. 2 Oct 75.

As regards the conditions at the time, Griffiths says that there were "unusual meteorological conditions" over the whole country that day - gales and heavy rains, high winds and poor visibility over the Mersey area. Mancnester had some snow that morning, but things cleared up later (3/8 cumulus at a base of 600m, at 1900GMT). At the time of the fall there was no rain, but it was followed by sleet in a light breeze (too slight to fix a direction), with an air temperature of 3°C.

From the two aircraft that were anywhere near the area at approximately the fall-time, there were no reports of icing or its effects, and the structure of the ice-layers, which would have been considerably elongated by the airstream if it had formed on a plane, suggested a hailstone shaped like a rugby-ball. Griffiths concludes: "The ice sample displays a puzzling collection of features. Whilst it is clearly composed of cloud water, there is no conclusive evidence enabling one to decide precisely how it grew...In some respects it is very much like a hailstone, in others it is not." The possibility that it was formed on an aircraft, the usual scapegoat-theory, is not bourne out by the available flight records, nor for that matter by the physical examination of the two planes. For the full details of the examination of the ice, the weather records, and flight details, see the write-up by Griffiths in the Meteorological Magazine, Sept 75, p253ff - from which we extract our notes, including Griffiths' own account of his near extinction. (Cr: Phil Ledger.) The story also appeared in the New Scientist, 2 Oct 75; and the Guardian 29 Sept 75 (Cr: Graham Crowley, John Michell & Ann Williams.) which roared "Mystery meteor ...defies the laws of cloud physics and dynamics." However, they got the year wrong (at 1975) which no doubt caused some confusion.

Griffiths could give no conclusions, other than it was formed out of cloud water, and that it had not formed in a container (!). It is estimated that an updraft of at least 200mph would be needed to keep a 6" hailstone in the air (see INFO Journal No3, p12ff in which Ron Willis analyses the standard theories of ice-falls). Griffiths gives figures of wind-shear for the nearest vertical sounding station, but the deeper mysteries of metric-conversion are beyond your editor's capabilities. We do know, though, that over at Whitby, on the Yorkshire coast, there were winds of about 110mph -but that's miles away. Griffiths does say that the wind-shear figures are "comparable with those recorded during the storm of 1 July 1968, near Cardiff, in which giant hailstones fell," - but gives no dimensions.

Although the New Scientist lauds Griffiths for "leaving the matter open", it strikes us Forteans that despite his use of the term hydrometeor to describe the object, there is nothing in his report suggestive of a meteoric origin. Quite the opposite - it was "clearly composed of cloud water."

There is another interesting aspect of this incident. 9 minutes before the fall, Griffiths was walking along Burton Road. Suddenly there was "a single flash of lightning which extended over a very wide area of Manchester. This was noted by many people because of its severity, and because there were no further flashes." The professional Griffiths made a note of the time and nature of the flash, and the weather conditions. In his subsequent efforts to check out the possibility that the ice dropped from a plane, he was able to establish accurately the position of the most likely of the two, because it was actually struck by that single blast - 12km NW of the fall. Indeed because its position is accurat- known, Griffiths estimated the bolt length at anything up to 25km long - and it was more than likely the presence of the plane actually precipitated the discharge.

If there is no connexion between the vivid single flash of lightning (an interesting enough event in itself), and the fall of the largish chunk of ice 9 minutes later, then we have an extraordinary meteorological coincidence. But the datum that would have really had Fort leaning forward was the presence at the scene of both events of a professional meteorologist, who was also, at that time, employed as a lightning observer for the Electrical Research Association.

CASHEL, EIRE - ICE BLOCK.

A block of ice, estimated to have weighed about 2 lbs, fell, burying 1½ inches into the lawn at the entrance gate of St Patrick's Hospital, Cashel, Co Tipperary. The ice narrowly missed two of the maintenance staff working nearby. One, Thomas Purlong, said: "It sounded like a shot." This is very interesting in that some kind of aerial sound or detonation is one of the most consistent elements common to fall-stories. In the Manchester fall (above), the flash was followed about 3 seconds later by thunder, which was in turn followed by the fall - though here, of course, the 8min 57sec gap between the last two events may be too long to establish any useful causal connexion.

A spokesman for the meteorological office at Cashel could only imagine the ice fell from a plane - both witnesses said there was no plane around at the time. However, they did say that there was a large black cloud overhead. A contradiction creeps in here, as the spokesman proclaimed the clouds "not high enough" to produce such a piece of ice.

Alas, we have no accurate date for this, and we can only ask that any Irish readers so inclined, follow it up. The story was cut from an Irish paper about June 20th, 1974 , by John Michell. We wrote to the Cork Evening Echo, many months ago, but no reply to date.

It is worth noting here that Fort recorded an earlier fall for Cashel, toward the end of Ch 8, Book of the Damned. On 2 Aug 1865 (darn nearly 100 years earlier) a "worked" pyramidal stone wedge fell from the sky. A Dr Haughton commented on a singular feature - the rounded edges bore regular lines marked in the black crust "as perfect as if made by a ruler."

ROUEN, FRANCE - ICE BLOCK.

We found another old ice-fall in the file not recorded in our earlier round-up (see NEWSs 3/8; and 6/10.)

Jean Preypys was working in his garden in Rouen when he heard a whistling sound. He looked up just in time to see a 2 lb block of ice plummet into his flower bed. Birmingham Evening Mail, 26 June 71.

VENUS UNVEILED.

On 21 Oct, the Russian probe Venera 9 fell to the surface of Venus and sent back a dramatic panoramic photograph. On the 25th, Venera 10 did the same from a spot about 1400 miles away. Several startling points were immediately apparent. Not only was the atmosphere more transparent than predicted (the

horizon in the photo is 200-300m away), there were rocks scattered as far as visiblity allowed you to see, and some of these bore the sharp-edged fractures of recently formed rocks. Boris Nepoklonov, chief Venusian topographer of the Central Institute of Geodesy, said: "On the first picture we saw a scattering of large rocks, a typically young mountainscape; the second station showed us a landscape typical of old mountain formations."

Venus, it seems, as dead as theory has up to now led most scientists to believe -- these indications of tectonic and volcanic activity suggest the planet is "alive" and still in the process of formation -- although the Russians are careful to mention other factors as well. Dmitry Grigoryev, chairman of the International Commission on Space Minerology said it was difficult to believe these rocks were destroyed in situ. "It looks more likely that some unknown force has scattered these rocks over the surface. Perhaps they fell or slipped down from surrounding rocks. It could also be that these are the outbursts of giant meteoric craters." Though, as New Scientist, 30 Oct 75, comments, "There is no evidence from this particular picture of any of the craters which have been mapped by radar." More detailed and technical information on the results of the two probes can be found in the Novosti Bulletin Nos 26488 (24 Oct 75), 26491 (27 Oct 75) & 26520 (4 Nov 75), from which we have taken most of our details.

There is one person to whom these revelations have not come as a surprise: Dr Immanuel Velikovsky, whose catastrophic theory of the formation of the solar system, particularly the peregrinations of Venus which, says Velikovsky, came from outside and brushed near the Earth on its way to its present position, had driven most orthodox cosmologists speechless with fury. The 82-year-old psychoanalyst who derived this theory from the analysis of mythical history, has, since the publication of Worlds in Collision 25 years ago, been highly gratified at what he considers confirmation of his theories. There is no denying that he is substantially correct in his predictions that Venus is "young" (ie still geologically active), just as previous Venus-probes confirmed his idea of the high temperature, atmospheric pressure and atmospheric constituents. See Sunday Express 2 Nov 75, for a fuller comment. Cr: S Moore.

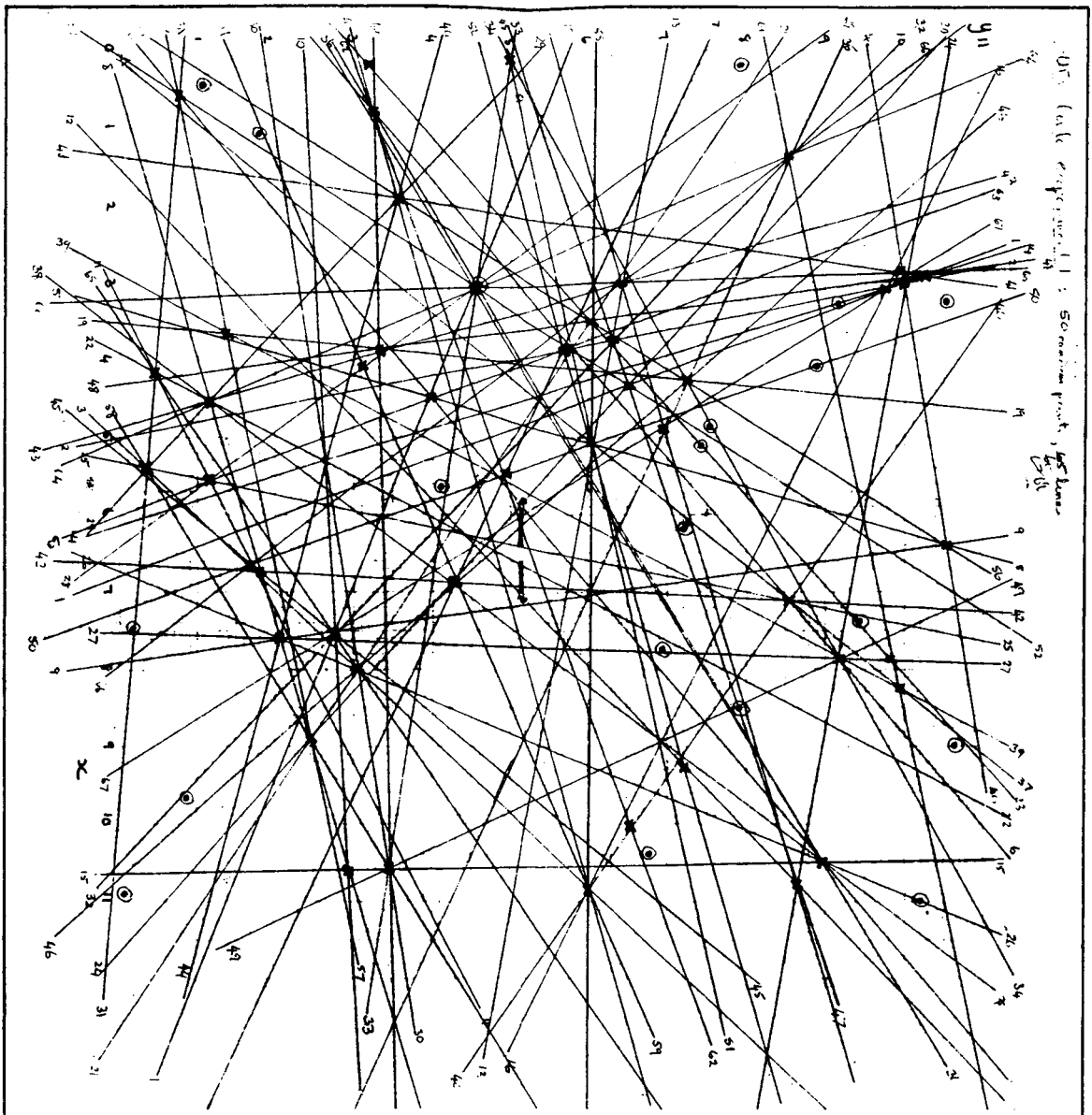
THE NUMBER IS UP.

In the weeks at the end of October and the beginning of November, TV viewere were confronted with a strange downward ripple (on all channels) - a compulsive twiddler's delight. It seems that many sets in England were also picking up programmes from Sweden, Germany and Switzerland. The met.men blame it on "strange weather conditions" - something like a reversal in the temperatures of layers of air -- an inadequate explanation if you ask us. One IBA spokesman said that normal TV transmissions range up to 50 miles, but the weather conditions were permitting signal distances of up to 500 miles.

What astonishes us is that in the wake of all the highly unusual meteorological and geological events so far this year, not to mention the flaring of a couple of new stars (see last issue), no one has correlated this with the current freak TV reception conditions. What is going on? But, like Alfred Bester's Pi-man, we believe in balance, and will now correct the omission with an amazing correlation of our own. On 29th Oct, the Russians launched another satellite. The full significance of its name and number will not escape those with a numerological bent. It was Cosmos 777. Although we have mentioned it before, for the benefit of those who missed it earlier, Cosmos 666 went into orbit 15 July 74. Between these two nexuses (?) everything has gone haywire. Novosti Bulletin No 26504 (30 Oct 75).

Leys, UFOs & Chance

Robert Forrest



First Experiment: A UFO-link simulation with 50 random ley points (X), 76 'Leys' of order 3 or more, and 20 (random) 'UFO-sightings' superimposed (◎). About half the UFOs fall on or near a 'ley'. Both UFOs and Ley points were generated from random number tables.

Having studied the 'chance hypothesis vs. ley lines' problem over the past few months, I have at length concluded that the mathematical evidence for the existence of ley lines is poor. I hope shortly to publish a booklet outlining the methods by which I came to this conclusion, but for the present article I restrict myself to one particular problem - the alleged link between UFOs and ley lines.

If ley lines do not exist, if they are merely a chance effect, then such statements as "90% of UFO sightings occur on or close to leys" must be a predicted outcome of the chance hypothesis. I have found this to be the case, and will outline three experiments - all backed up by theoretical considerations - which point the way to this conclusion.

The first experiment is a small scale simulation of what goes on. Using random number tables (to avoid 'personal bias') I drafted 50 random points onto a sheet of graph paper (the graph paper was 17.5 cm square, and each ley point a small disc 0.5 mm in diameter). These were to represent ley points on a map. Next I inserted all connecting lines between the points which were of order 3 or more (ie. lines going through 3 points or more). These were to represent ley lines. (about 70 such lines were obtained on this scale). Finally, I drafted 20 more points onto the map (the 'points' being the same size as the ley points, and determined by random number tables) and used these to represent UFO sightings. The result was that, on this scale, about half the UFOs appeared on or close to a 'ley'.

The second experiment was designed to show what an average map would look like if <u>all</u> leys of order at least 4 were inserted.

Fifty random points were again drafted onto a sheet of paper and each point joined to every other, the connecting line being produced to the edges of the paper. About 1100 distinct lines were thus obtained which cut the paper into a vast number of, on the whole, tiny regions. (it can be shown that this number of lines slices the paper into about 300,000 such regions!). If we were to draft UFOs onto this sheet of paper as we did in the first experiment, there would be precious little room for them to fall <u>without</u> actually landing on or near some line or other.

Now it can be shown that on a 1:50,000 O/S map, containing about 330 ley points, we can expect about 1100 ley lines each of order at least 4, and each aligned to within 35 yards. So that, if <u>all</u> these ley lines were to be actually inserted on the map, the result would look rather like the piece of paper above. That is, scarred beyond recognition in many places by criss-crossing pencil lines.

From personal experience on a smaller scale, I very much doubt if any ley hunter has ever actually inserted <u>all</u> the possible ley lines on a map containing this number of points. Such a task would be unbelievably tedious, and I suspect that most ley hunters stop before they have got anywhere near their full quota. But the leys will be there, if they should need them - and this point raised an interesting third experiment.

Suppose the ley hunter drafts UFOs onto his map and <u>then</u> looks for the leys on which the UFOs might lie.

I therefore took an old 1" O/S map (sheet 159) of the Chilterns and ringed all the churches, ancient sites, etc. There were 560 odd of them, many of which were probably non-valid as ley-points (eg. modern churches), but nevertheless I went ahead to see what would happen. I then drafted 6 spurious UFO sightings onto the map using random number tables. Each UFO sighting was a disc about 0.1" in diameter, corresponding to a possible error in fixing the UFO position from the UFO sighting of 200 yards.

Each UFO was found to lie not on just one ley, but at the intersection of a minimum of 3 leys, each ley of order at least 4. Two of the UFOs actually fell on the same ley of order 7 (Here again, leys were aligned to within 35 yards).

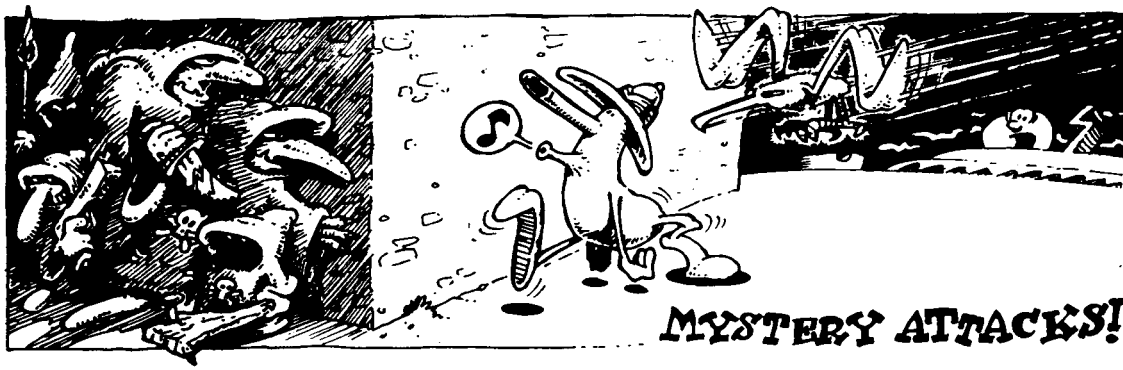
Now it is possible to predict the average number of leys of order at least 4 which we can expect to intersect at a UFO sighting. For the above case it works out at about 5, so the results actually obtained were well in accord with the chance hypothesis.

Even if we reject 200 or so of the 560 points as non-valid, we are still left, remember, with a map which, if all the leys were inserted, would be chopped into some 300,000 pieces.

That 90% of UFO sightings occur in the vicinity of leys, I, for one, am not surprised.

+***+ +***+ +***+ +***+ +***+

R Forrest. June 1975.



MYSTERY ATTACKS!

THE MYSTERY OF MERRY'S WOUNDS.

The strange case of 35-year-old Frederick Merry began quietly with an announcement in the Daily Mail, 13 June 75, that a "streaker" was critically ill in Mile End Hospital, with brain damage, after being arrested by police dancing naked in Victoria Park, Bethnal Green, London, early on the morning of the 12th. He had waded across an ornamental lake to a wooded island where he was running about bumping into trees.

Next day, the papers said he had died in the night - doctors did not know why and tests were being carried out. There was much play made of the tidbit that Merry had,only ten days before, joined a nature sect called The Emin, or "Faithful One", and that they encouraged talking to plants, etc. Senior sect member, John Edge, protested that nothing they taught him could have led him to act this way.

As usual with these cases, one feels that all the public statements conceal more than they reveal. Indeed, three weeks later, Time Out, 4-10 July 75, reveals an altogether sinister version of the events. Relatives of the "Mystic Streaker", as the media tagged Merry, said he had obviously taken a terrible beating, and called for an inquiry into his death. When he emerged from the woods on the island with 2 policemen, a woman officer and two park-keepers, he was "still naked, badly injured, handcuffed, and chained around the legs." By the time he arrived at hospital, he was "virtually dead." Attempts were made to get him breathing, but they failed. An anonymous caller from the hospital told the local paper that he had never seen such shocking injuries on a person who had just been arrested. His brother David spoke of "appalling injuries", marks and bruises all over his body. Merry's mouth was reportedly clogged with earth. Later at the inquest it was said that his body was covered with earth and twigs; and his chains (like those for securing gates) had to be struck off by hospital workers.

Now, you might be thinking, even if (stress if) this was a case of bizarre police brutality - of what interest to us Forteans could it be? Well, your editor has bizarre afflictions of his own - perhaps (stress perhaps) there might be some affinity in the case with other of our tales of wounds mysteriously appearing on people, whether from an attack by an invisible; a psychosomatic projection (eg stigmata) or (wow!) the teleporting of wounds from an unguessable somewhere to appear instantaneously on the victim. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, we maintain that all hypotheses should be borne in mind. And just in case, we do have adequate records of wounds that have appeared, and just as mysteriously disappeared -- at least they seem like records.

The inquest on Merry was closed as soon as it opened, and much to the disgust of Time Out (ever vigilant on behalf of defenceless hippies against the machinations of the police-state), with no date set for resumption. However, with the prospect of a full-scale police-atrocity scandal hanging over their heads, Scotland Yard's A10 branch did their own investigation and sent a report to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The inquest, when it resumed, contained no evidence of murder or manslaughter. Merry's father said that his stepson had been agitated for some days previously, and on the morning of the 12th, at 1am, began to spread his arms, crosslike, standing naked, murmuring and staring at the sky - then he drove off in his van to the park. It would seem that a crowd had gathered watching Merry on the island, used as a bird sanctuary. When he saw the keepers coming, he began screaming and shouting. He resisted "with the strength of ten", butting one on the chin. Then the police turned up and overpowered him while he was bumping around in the trees. Somehow we think of a headless chicken running in circles, oblivious to obstacles - perhaps all Merry could think of was the avoiding of things that had intruded into and debased his meditations. Perhaps he was not even human. The park-keepers said Merry was in a fairly good condition when he left the park - yet when he arrived at the hospital later he had bruising to nearly every part of his body. A family friend said he looked like "a young

man who had been beaten to death."

A forensic expert testified that no drugs or alcohol were involved - and that a "severe continuous pressure to the side of the neck" had resulted in brain damage and heart failure. But since some of Merry's actions in the park were attributed to this "brain damage" - the whole matter of when the "continuous pressure" was applied is in question.

A barrister for the family questioned the differences between the testimonies of the park-keepers and the police, and the condition in which Merry arrived in hospital. Before this could be answered, the Coroner adjourned the court (with no date for resumption, again) on the grounds that witnesses might be about to incriminate themselves, and that the question was a thinly disguised allegation of perjury. Nevertheless - if the keepers said he was OK when he left the park, and the police imply they didn't touch him but that he injured himself in the park - perhaps someone is lying. To press-date no more has been heard of this case. But our minds tick over - there is a condition that would satisfy the testimony of both parties. We think of the unfortunate recipients of unexpected wounds - wounds that materialise on their bodies often during a profound mystical experience, or an equivalent communion with forces we know little about -- and how inexplicable and embarrassing this could be if it happened during police custody! We do not say this happened, but following the admirable lead of Stuart Greenwood in tossing out hypotheses to be tested, we toss out this one. After testing it we may even throw it out. (above details from Daily Mail and Daily Express, 24 Oct 75; Time Out, 31 Oct - 6 Nov 75. Credit for all items: Steve Moore). Let us consider some other stories on this theme - they may throw some light on our hypothesis, and each other.

CAUSE OF DEATH...UNKNOWN!

Three boys, aged between 16 and 20, were found dead in the living-room of a house in Calverton Road, Arnold, Notts, in early Feb 1972. They had been playing guitars - which for the record, were acoustic - no electrical equipment around. One was the son of the woman who owned the house - the other two, identities unknown at the time of the clipping, had been put up for the night. When the woman came back from shopping she found one boy slumped in a chair, guitar on lap , the others on the floor. A Det. Inspector said: "The cause of death at this moment is a complete mystery." One faint wisp of a clue - - the lady said the house was noticably warm. Sun, 9 Feb 72.

A couple and their baby were found dead in a caravan at Alnesbourn Priory, near Ipswich. The only theory (which does not seem to be substantiated) is that they were gassed by fumes from a heater. Guardian, 25 Feb 74.

George Hicks, 38, serving 6 months for motoring offences, was found dead in his Pentonville cell, 14th March. Cause of death was given at the inquest, as unknown - no other info available. Daily Telegraph 15 March 75.

ATTACKS BY INVISIBLES?

In the late summer of this year, a "hammer fiend" stalked the Beechwood estate, Sunbury Cross, London. In at least three attacks, he crept up silently "like a ghost" and felled the three girls with one blow, then just stared at them before running off into the night. There is a thin discription of a man the police are looking for, so this is no phantom, as such. Sunday Mirror, 24 Aug 75.

What interests us here is that the history of polterghost hauntings are replete with ghostly pushes, pokes in the ribs, slaps and pinches and punches. Besides, we feel that across a century, that arch-mystery-attacker, who breathed flames into the faces of unsuspecting girls and fled into the night - Spring-heeled Jack, a classic man-in-black - is still laughing at us.

Just to confuse the issue, we'll relate here the blow that knocked out Mrs Santuzza Campbell, 55, who was alone on a clifftop at Bridlington, Yorks, in Sept 1954. Nothing could be found on the site that could account for the lump on her head that put her into hospital. One theory was that something had fallen from a plane - if so, she would not have been alive. Daily Express, 8 Sept 54. Cr: Harold SW Chibbett.

On 10th Oct 1968, cuts and scratches were found on seven babies, aged between 5 and 6 days, in Nether Edge Hospital, Sheffield. One was cut on the foot, which was, of course, under the bed-covers, which rather foundered the belief that an animal somehow got in. This maternity ward was on the 3rd floor and three staff were on duty in the ward during the night - and security is fairly tight. It was thought that finger-nails could not account for the injuries,(all the babies were well after treatment), and since animals and other intruders could be discounted, the actual cause of the injuries was unknown, said the hospital secretary Frank Turner. Daily Mirror 11 Oct 68. Cr: Anthony Smith.

11-year-old Ian Salt was startled by something as he set out from his home in Solihull, Warks, to go plane-spotting at Birmingham Airport, in March 1974. He was found drowned in a hidden pool well away from his normal route. Forensic experts, studying his tracks across a field, believe that he was being chased, and had crashed through a hedge into the pool, in panic. Nothing is said about any other sets of tracks in the ploughed field - and nothing more was ever said about the case. Daily Mirror, 5 March 74.

Similarly, the police are baffled over the strange drowning of Garnett Oliver, a retired

farmer of 85. He was found in 4ft of water in a well at Field Farm, Partney, Lincs, where he lived, only an hour after chatting cheerily with a friend. A heavy concrete slab had been removed from the well-top. The Spilsby District Coroner, Mr Ian Mitchell, said there were no marks on the body such as would indicate a fall into the narrow well; no suggestion of a coronary collapse; and no evidence of interferance by another person. The death remained unexplained. Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph, 24 April 75. Cr: N Watson.

The photo below (from the Sunday People, 22 June 75) shows the bruises on the throat of Mrs Gladys Worthington. She says that her house in Salvin St, Croxdale, Co Durham, gives both her and her husband the shivers. Recently, things have been moving about on their own, and once saw a ghostly white figure. They have asked the council to re-house them after this latest experience.

She was lying in bed when she felt a hand on her throat - it was 2am, her husband was on night-shift and her four dogs sleeping downstairs. "I woke with a start. In the darkness I could see nothing. But I felt a tingling sensation running up my body from my toes. I tried to scream, but I couldn't. As quickly as it came,the sensation went. Then, seconds later, it happened again. I lay awake for the rest of the night. I got up thinking I'd been dreaming. Then I went to the mirror to make up my face. and got a terrible shock. There were five bruises like pressure marks from a thumb and four fingers." The doctor she went to agreed that the marks were made by a deep pressure ("apparently a hand") on her throat - but he won't believe her story about being strangled by a ghost. He may be wiser than he thinks. Perhaps it wasn't a ghost - look at the date! It's only about 9 days after Frederick Merry died from the effects of "a severe continuous pressure to the side of the neck." Perhaps a phantom strangler stalked London that month!

INSTANT GRIEVOUS BODILY HARM.

Now we're getting frighteningly heavy - and our tales are far from entertaining. Barry Lacy, 26, kissed his wife and children and set off at 8 o'clock to begin his morning's work at a nearby farm, Summer 1969. He did not turn up for lunch. Later he was found in a field he had been ploughing - 200 yards from his tractor, which was still upright, motor running. He had serious head injuries and beneath his body, his flask of coffee was crushed. He was rushed to Battle Hospital, Reading, Berks, with a fractured skull and his left side paralysed. Now, more than two years later he is completely paralysed and can remember nothing of the circumstances of his accident. The case was investigated by the police, solicitors, farm machinery experts, and insurance claim investigators, Lacy's workmates and the farm owner — and all remain baffled. Sunday Express, 28 Nov 71.

On the 7th July 73, a man was found unconscious near Port Angeles, Washington - with a broken shoulder and knee. He was about 40, did not know his own name, address or even face, and had never heard of Port Angeles. He was thought to have fallen to the foot of a bluff, where he was found, but there seems to be an element of uncertainty in the statement, as though the most obvious explanation was grasped at in the absence of any confirming evidence. Washington Star News, 20 July 73.

What was said to be a "riddle of a murder without a motive" was reported in the Sun, 27 Sept 74. Aubrey Packham, 60, was found battered to death in a coach firm's office in Southall, Middlesex, that day. Nothing was stolen from the firm or the man, and there was no sign of a break-in. Police say there was no evidence of a fight and no murder weapon has been found.

On the 27th Dec, a young man, identity unknown,was found dead in a room of the Excelsior Hotel, Glasgow airport. His name, passport number and Glasgow address were all

false. A curious detail -- despite a "6 inch surgical wound" in his chest ((shades of Kaspar Hauser, et al.)) a post-mortem failed to reveal the cause of death. Guardian, 30 Dec 74. Credit: JDM Start.

Another tractor driver! Edward Russell,66, died in hospital on 22nd Feb this year, after being found unconscious beside his tractor - wearing only his shoes and socks - on Broadreed Farm, Rowlands Castle, Hants. It was thought that the "power take-off gear" had stripped him of his clothes.(!!!?). News of the World, 23 Feb 75. Cr: RE Cotton.

The little village of Nayland, Suffolk, celebrated the Bank Holiday of 26th May with its usual dance at the church social - and its three pubs were crowded. Shortly before 11pm, vetinary surgeon Sebastian Salaman and widow Mrs Alice Hawes left - he giving her a lift to her remote cottage. Next morning Mrs Hawes, 79, was found with a broken leg in her living room, and Mr Salaman,69, was lying outside in the road with fractured skull, broken ribs and pelvis. He died in hospital, 24 hours later, without regaining consciousness. Detectives thought he was the victim of a hit and run accident, but the only cars that use the single-track lane belong to the residents and they were cleared within the week - now they think it might be murder. But Det.Super. Jack Sharman of Suffolk CID says later: "This is a most unusual inquiry in that we still cannot say with certainty that a crime has been committed." Mrs Hawes, recovering in hospital, says she can only remember falling down in the cottage shortly after Salaman left. Tony Osborne and his son were leaving their house opposite Mrs Hawes' at 6.45am when he saw Salaman lying half in the road, five yards from his car. There was blood on the rockery, the garden fence and Mr Salaman's car, and the cottage door was open. Everyone is said to be dazed and baffled in the village - not the least, Mrs Hawes' neighbours at Campion Hill, who heard nothing at all that night, as something savagely battered Mr Salaman. If you postulate two coincident accidents, you are still left with Mr Salaman's mysterious wounding. Sunday Express, 8 June 75.

78-year-old Mrs Sarah Davies died of "extensive injuries". She was found lying in the yard of her daughter's home at Cilcennin, near Aberaeron, Dyfed, Wales, on 14th May, semi-conscious and with fractures in pelvis and skull. A consultant pathologist to the Bronglais General Hospital, Aberystwyth, said that the injuries were concurrent with "some considerable fall" — yet Det.Chief Inspector John Owen-Evans said that she could not have fallen downstairs, or from a window, or been in a road accident. Foul play was not suspected - and the only idea he could come up with was that she fell once in the house, and then again outside. The Western Mail, 5 July 75. Cr: FW Holiday.

During the height of the storm that battered England on 8th Aug (see NEWS 12/7) Mrs Alice Mellor, 75, was found battered to death in a field at Pond Farm, South Crosland, near Huddersfield. She had gone out looking for one of her Friesian cows who was due to calve, and one theory was that lightning spooked the cows into trampling over her. But the police were not happy with the theory and there were suspicious and contradictory elements involved in the evidence. Assuming something worse, house-to-house inquiries were made, and there was a search for any murder-weapon - but to no avail. Despite being battered "beyond recognition" (according to the People), the post-mortem could not establish the cause of her death. Sunday People & Sunday Express, 10 Aug 75. Cr: Steve Moore & Nigel Watson.

MASS CARDIAC ARRESTS?

The Veterans Administration Hospital, Ann Arbor, Michigan, was embarrassed - over the first three weeks of August an extraordinary number of patients have died. The exact figure has not been given but hospital spokesmen have been quoted at 23, 34 and as high as 41, dying of heart failure and respiratory collapse. Dr Laurence Foye, Deputy Chief Med. Director, said an investigation centred on 15 patients whose doctors had not expected them to have gone into this condition, had failed to explain what had happened, or why.

Many of these patients were in a post-surgery intensive care ward - but another doctor said that collapses had happened on other floors and wards. Tests were made of the patients' bile, blood and fluids, but the results were "inconclusive" because some of the testing equipment "malfunctioned". Intravenous drip units were examined for contamination, and searches were made for mislabled bottles and medicines. Nothing!

It would seem that the symptoms of this collapse were similar to those suggestive of muscle relaxants like Curare, Pancuron, and Succinylcholine chlorine - all used at the hospital. So another search was made, and despite Dr Foyes careful statement that he would not confirm these collapses were "induced", speculations began to mount about a maniac poisoner. Dr Ronald Bishop, Chief of Medicine, said that traces of a muscle relaxant were found on an IV drip in use. ((Even though we naturally root for the outré theory - please bear in mind that as Fort showed ad nauseum, anybody who sets out to find or prove something, usually can, if he's halfway competant.)) Dr Duane Freier, Hospital Chief of Staff, believed the drug was the relaxant Tavulom. "If this is true," he said, "It is likely to be intentional." Security was tightened and, as if to confirm the poisoner theory, there were no more occurrences.

That would seem to be that - but for the suspicious lack of developments. Reading between the lines, the identity of the fiend could not be established and no source found

for the drug - despite the involvement of the FBI. If the patients were in intensive care, there would be records and monitorings, yet the fiend slipped in and out of many wards and floors slipping nasty stuff into peoples intravenous drip bottles, and hung about to see them suffer (for that is the only conceivable motive). All this without arrousing suspicion, in a hospital on edge as the collapses increased. Now, in true MIB-panic tradition, a patient speaks out - he woke one night (presumably after the scare was over) to find someone trying to inject something into his arm — we wonder if this was simply a response to the panic, or indeed the incredibly elusive poisoner?

Fort wrote about many kinds of panics — the jabbers and stabbers, the rippers and clippers, the snatchers and snipers, the 'kissing bug' and Typhoid Mary — they all politely fit a pattern. They are masters of etiquette, appearing to conform to the most acceptable theories of the day, until a closer examination reveals certain crude but fundamental disagreements. They respond with all the fawning grace of those desiring social respectability - relaxants are postulated - and by the minutest trace they are found with malfunctioning equipment. This is a veneer - beneath it lurks the MO of the 'attack'. "All would be well, all would be heavenly" - if only the victims would keep their mouths shut. (Story from New York Times, 21 Aug 75. Cr: Bill Grimstad.) The line between fiction and what people call truth is impossible to draw, except by resorting to fictional absolutes, or points which are only relative to other relative points. The trouble comes thickest in our kind of data. You will have to decide for yourself, find your own way through this hall-of-mirrors of shifting and ambiguous data. About the only thing we can say that makes any sense is: please tread carefully.

PHANTOM SNIPERS.

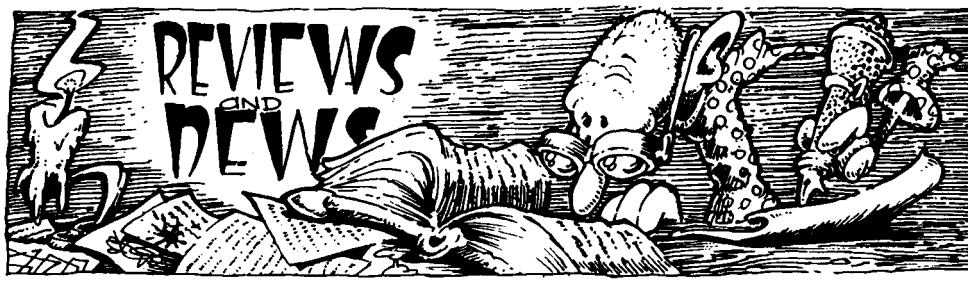
A man enjoying a rifle-range at 'Playland' Amusement Arcade, Coventry St, London, on the 20th June 71, collapsed with a bullet in his shoulder. There were witnesses, but no clue to the origin of the shot. As if to confound what was already a mystery, it was revealed that six weeks previously a Greek died on the same spot after shooting himself with one of the rifles, and within the year a third man was wounded there. Daily Mirror, 21 June 71. Cr: A Smith.

Police were hunting a gunman after three people were injured in south-west London on the night of 2 April this year. Not much information is given in the report, except that a woman in Twickenham, a man in Richmond and another in Wimbledon were all wounded by what looked like pellets from an airgun. No mention is made of witnesses - but how conventional to think of a gunman — we know better don't we? The Sun, 3 April 75.

But then to think of phantom snipers is our own conventionality - that just won't do, It's when we're lazy or tired, that we're at our most conventional, as Fort noted, and then it's only too easy to think of gunmen when bullets are found, phantom or otherwise. Consider this — Miner Tom Coxon driving with his wife and two daughters in the car, on 8 Oct, near the aptly named No-Man's Heath, Ashby-de-la-Zouche, in Leicestershire. Suddenly he cries out, and blood begins to spurt from a hole in his head. He managed to drive to a service station, where someone took him to hospital. He was then transferred to the neuro-surgical unit of North Staffs General Hospital, where he now lies paralysed down one half of his body, with three pieces of metal lodged near his brain. Daily Express 9 Oct 75. Two days later the police hunt down and arrest two brothers who were driving a van that was passing at the time Tom got 'hit' — their assumption is that they fired an airgun at Tom. If so, they must be the most remarkable marksmen ever, to have a man through a car window (it is not said whether it was open or not!) three times as the two cars pass, and to get all three pellets into the same hole in the man's head. It is worth noting here that the three pieces of metal must have arrived simultaneously, on the same trajectory, because Tom cried out once and put his hand up to his head, which then would have been hit by numbers 2 & 3. Secondly, and I'm open to correction here, I wouldn't have thought an airgun would have the power to penetrate a skull. Since the two brothers were remanded (Daily Express, 11 Oct 75) we have heard nothing, not even what the pieces of metal were. As the hunt began for the passing van, Superintendant Thomas Bush did not sound too convinced: "We are completely snookered. This is one of the most baffling mysteries I have ever known." I suppose they had to be seen to be doing something, at least. It's my guess the case against the two brothers was dropped for lack of evidence. (Cr: Steve Moore.)

POST SCRIPT.

Having typed up the above notes days ago, I came across a passage in Father Thurston's Ghosts and Poltergeists (Burns Oates 1953p21) - quoted from a study of an astonishing case, published in 1800 - and we give it as a postscript to the 'strangling' on p16. Two girls were the center of many attacks. Of one, the investigator, Henry Durbin, said: "I saw the flesh at the side of her throat pushed in, whitish as if done with fingers, though I saw none. Her face grew red and blackish presently, as if she were strangled, but without any convulsion or contraction of the muscles. We went to her and I touched her head. It went off in a moment and she was well, which could not have taken place had it been the effect of a natural disorder." The case happened in Bristol, December 1761.



MIRACLES OF THE GODS by Erich von Daniken.
Souvenir Press; £3.75; pp237; illos, refs & bibliog (though most of it's in German); ISBN 0 285 62174 2.

It took courage to read this book!

Von Daniken explains its context - "When I was following the trail of my astronaut gods through the five continents, I made a point of visiting every accessible visionary shrine." On this evidence, I'd say he hasn't been cured yet. "Riding a bold steeplechase through history," he opens with a summary of the most famous visions, and some less well-known ones. The book ends with a useful (though admittedly incomplete) chronology of visions, from 5000BC to the face on the chalice-cloth last year at Castelnaud-en-Guers, France (see NEWS 7/11).

Who are the people who see visions? vonD askes himself. "Are visions simply psychological phenomena caused by mass autosuggestion, as the materialists often conclude?",though this begs the question (a familiar vonD technique). Visions in the broad context are far from simple, and 'mass autosuggestion' explains nothing, least of all to materialists. He then reviews the standard theories: hysteria, probably heightened by asceticism and shaped by dogma; bio-feedback techniques, and other methods of self-induced 'ecstasy'; or actual messages from Gods; etc; taking in associated material like water-divining (vision-sites are often by wells and springs); theories of space-time(some of the phenomena seems to transcend these categories); and healing. The book is subtitled 'a Hard Look at the Supernatural" but he restricts himself largely to visions.

Many of the classical visions have been accompanied by strange aerial phenomena, not visible to all present, but a good many -- eg. the visions of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM) at Fatima (1917) and Cairo (1968) are often quoted in UFO literature, and it is here that vonD returns to his magnum opus. His conclusion is that visions are induced by intervention from space. He never really defines what he means by a 'vision', and so he appears to be constantly contradicting himself by including the gamut from an individually witnessed event where we have to take the person's word, to group visions of obviously religious characters, to group witnessing of solar and other curious aerial and astronomical phenomena, to visionary dreams, to images and faces that appear on surfaces, and weeping statues etc. One example of this difficulty is that, contrary to his previous books, the angels that abound in the Old Testament (used as non-Christian evidence) now become 'visions' in place of visiting extraterrestrials (ETs).

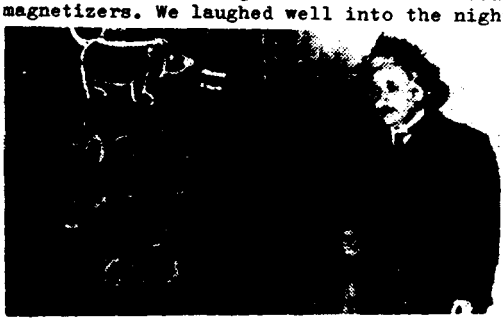
After a most interesting dissertation on the past evils and exploitation (of visions) by the Church, he finally goes off the deep end. His reasoning (some will jibe at that) is simple. Animal man has latent paranormal (he calls them parapsychological) faculties, and these can be stimulated when the ETs shoot their beams into our brains. The resultant imagery is the product of our conditioning. Children figure prominently as recipients because they are "ideally prepared for the supernatural by their intensive religious upbringing" - a highly contentious point, both on biographical data, and from his own chronology where children account for probably a third of the visions, and then only from about 1835 - a comparatively recent phenomenon. Anyway, vonD maintains that children are frightened by these flashes in their heads, and being predisposed religiously, seek some security in projecting a mother-image. "In fact, faster than light communications produced oscillations in the sub- or supraconsciousness and communication with extraterrestrial beings was established." Whaaaat!? Another curious line of reasoning ignores his previous comments on our innate dowsing talents -- only the ETs could have revealed the hiding place of the Mormon tablets to Joseph Smith, because only they could have placed them on Earth thousands of years previously. The Angel Moroni? - oh! he's dismissed as a projection of the "fairy-tale factory", an unfortunate byproduct of the ET contact. The "solar miracles" (which as far as I remember were only sun-like and nothing to do with Sol) are in fact visions of the aliens spacecrafts, shown to the masses in order to reveal their hand behind all this. (Why not reveal the same to the scientists, whom vonD maintains are the true interpreters of the ET effort, instead of fooling around in such a field and in such a manner as to arouse the scientists' deepest suspicions, is not even asked!). And when the founders of "all" the world's religions have proclaimed that it was not them-

selves speaking, "but that which is in me", what they really mean, says vonD, is this ET intervention. And so on.

His logic is not all that bad - it's his premises that are pure crank: a) that because electricity is involved in processes in the brain, para-electrical processes must also be involved in thought, and are capable of being projected from afar to control the processes in the brain; and b) the ETs are doing this from space. Apart from anything else, there is a whopping assumption about the one-to-one correlation of mind and brain. In criticising the Church for the corners it backs itself into by strict adherance to high dogma, he doesn't seem to realise that his own devotion to "my astronaut gods" creates the same sort of idiotic paradoxes as the Church's invocation of the Holy Spirit - the existance of both being virtually impossible to prove to non-believers.

VonD's climax is the last chapter, where he gaily explains away every achievement in Art, Science, Technology and Religion as the product of "extraterrestrial impulse fields". Apparently Man has never had an original thought in his entire existance! In some people, this intervention cannot be turned to its 'proper' use, and visions (with spontaneous psychic phenomena) occur which are basically useless to our alien puppeteers. According to vonD, this is no error on the ETs' part - they can't help who stumbles into their 'impulse fields'. But when it goes according to plan - ah!, then we get practical visionaries like Einstein and da Vinci, to name but two (though there is quite a list of those scientific breakthroughs attributable to some kind of mystical experience.) When we talk of geniuses, says vonD, we are talking of a "chosen few, those ripe for contact, who are able to convert extraterrestrial impulses into thought molecules."

I was discussing this idea with an old acquaintance, Brother Bufo, a servitor at the crypt of St Ranunculus, when my thought molecules went into a tizzy. "Suppose one of their beams went wrong at a critical stage?" He observed me strangely, then rummaging in the heaps of shrine records, finally thrust this photo into my hands - conclusive evidence he said solemnly, that the Pogs..Bods..They were still perfecting their miracle molecule magnetizers. We laughed well into the night!



GODS OF AIR AND DARKNESS by Richard E Mooney. Souvenir Press; £3.50; pp203; ISBN 0 285 62176 9.

ON THE SHORES OF ENDLESS WORLDS by Andrew Tomas. Sphere paperback; 50p; pp175; index & bibliography; ISBN 0 7221 8545 6.

It seems strange how many Russian emigrés turn up in the Ancient God Squad - Tomas is probably the best writer among them and I enjoy his speculations immensely. When he casually tosses in tidbits, such as knowing the explorer Nicholas Roerich during his stay in China, I begin to realise some of the depth of experience in his writing. The atmosphere is that of a fireside or after dinner chat with a scholar, compared to Mooney's at times lecturing tone.

Shores is divided into two parts: the first explores the chemical, genetic and animal-social bonds that tie man to this planet; the second roams among the stars and our conviction that there is also life out there. Mooney is more pedestrian, dwelling on the theme begun in his previous book Colony:Earth — that our pre-historic beginings are founded in the ashes of the colony begun by aliens on this planet and which ended in nuclear warfare. If Mooney tends to regurgitate the same old facts at least he devotes some time to supplementing and discussing them.

There is a war brewing between Mooney, von Daniken & Kolosimo, of what I call the 'factoid' school, versus Charroux and Tomas (at least) of the more spiritually orientated mythographers. Some shots are fired in Mooney's book, mainly the allegation that Charroux's (et al) fondness for the unsubstantiated works of Madame Blavatsky bring the whole subject into disrepute — Tomas, aiming a broadside at "those who, sitting in their comfortable soft armchairs, pass judgment on a subject totally unfamiliar to them," goes on to cite a formidable list of explorers who ventured into Tibet and made "definite statements confirming the existence of hidden treasures of the stellar civilisers," - Cacella, Csoma de Koros, Przhevalsky, Kosloff, Grunwedel, Francke, Blavatsky, David-Neel, Ossendowski, and of course Roerich. If the basic issue is over establishing authorities, then I think Mooney and school ought to be very careful - their own works leave much to be desired.

Besides other differences, their themes reflect, I think, their basic approaches -- Mooney prodding laboriously for evidence of a nuclear disaster in our past; Tomas waxing expansively about our glorious future among the stars if only we would live in harmony with the living planetary entity first. Looks like a war could be brewing, and as our batrachian brother would say, Pog knows we need one!

THE LINK - THE EXTRAORDINARY GIFTS OF A TEENAGE PSYCHIC by Matthew Manning. Corgi pb; 65p; pp176; illos, index & appendices; ISBN 0 522 99955 5. -- One of the Fortfest events

was to have been a film on Matthew Manning made by the New Horizons Research Foundation, Toronto. Matthew, of Cambridge, has been manifesting many forms of psychic phenomena since he was 11: poltergeists, automatic writing & drawing, even out bending Geller. This book is his personal account of being the centre of manifestations that would frighten the life out of most of us, and is well illustrated with astonishingly recognizable spirit-drawings in the styles of Picasso, Durer, Klee, and Beardsley. There are two valuable appendices, one by Peter Bander on the messages via Matthew from a Greek Orthodox saint, Nektarios (d.1920) who wants a monastery built in England. Interestingly, the site is to be indicated by a vision of the BVM. The other is a personal statement by Dr ARG Owen, director of New Horizons and author of Can We Explain the Poltergeist?, of how he came to be involved in the testing of Matthew. Altogether, they make a valuable record of a case of genuinely inexplicable activity - the saga of which has not yet reached its conclusion.

THE MAGIC OF FINDHORN by Paul Hawken. Souvenir Press; £3.50; pp216; ISBN 0 285 62175 0.

Most people known the name 'Findhorn' even if the connexion is as vague as "something to do with fairies - isn't it?" The Findhorn community was founded by Peter Caddy when he retired to this caravan site on the bleak Moray coast in Scotland, to practice Rudolf Steiner's 'Bio-dynamic' theory of plant growth - and where, much to the astonishment of interested observers and sceptics alike, horticultural miracles bloomed and fruited in the poor sand, within feet of their neighbour's stringy plants. The secret, they said, was in living in harmony and working in close co-operation with the etheric and elemental forces of nature (the Landscape Angel, the Spinach Deva, etc). As word of this New Age community spread through the alternative grapevine, the rootless searchers of two generations made pilgrimages to work there. Somehow, the gardens became the symbolic crucible for their own spiritual regeneration. Paul Hawken spent one year among them and tells his and some of their stories - if you can put up with his rather self-conscious imitation of Tom Wolfe's 'New Journalism'. If I tell you that here are accounts of romping with fauns in a park, or walking down Edinburgh's Prince's St beside the god Pan, and so on - I hope you won't judge too hastily. It is ultimately a matter for personal judgment - but read it first - it's a fascinating account of a true enigma.

STRANGE POWERS by Colin Wilson. Abacus pb; pp126; 65p; ISBN 0 349 13733 1.

Since completing his monumental study The Occult, Wilson says that he met at least three people who deserved inclusion -- Robert Leftwich, a retired businessman who dowses and claims to demonstrably 'Astral Project'; Mrs Eunice Beattie, a retired hospital sister who has produced hundreds of pages of automatic writing, with prophetic elements; and Dr Arthur Guirdham, one of the central figures in a reincarnated group of Cathars from 13th century France, a case which is either "a carefully planned deception, or an important breakthrough in our knowledge of the universe" -- eacn an example of what Wilson has called 'Faculty X'.

Wilson regards this fairly short book as a postscript to The Occult. I too share his interest in the way people think, and their motivations in going 'against the herd', and so I find Wilson's own personal anecdotes of his inevitable and growing involvement with the literature, personalities and philosophies of the occult as interesting as any of the material here.

THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES by Joseph Campbell. Abacus; £1.70; illos & index; pp350; ISBN 0 349 10480 8. -- Campbell has been instrumental in the propagation of the Jungian thesis in the field of comparative religion. I find him eminantly readable (compared to Eliade) and his clear identification of the critical elements in myth and mystical experience has illuminated many an obscure corner of the human mind for me. There are two major cycles of myths here: the masculine hero of the monomyth, and the feminine hero, or 'mother' of the cosmogonic cycle - and the stages of each are examined in depth. Perhaps the most interesting chapter is the last, which can shed some light on the millenarianism of "nuts and bolts" ufology, with its promise of salvation from the skies. The modern manifestations of fundamental myths or archetypal patterns is something we should never lose sight of in our studies.

UFOs FROM BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN by Ion Hobana & Julien Weverbergh. Corgi pb; 65p; Illos & Bibliog; pp307; ISBN 0 522 10023 4. There are so few studies of Communist UFOlogy that it is impossible to judge this work by comparisons. Naturally, the political and official scientific views are gone into, and the role of the mass media in this context is particularly interesting. I suspect that most of the interest in this book will lie in the valuable compilations of sightings for Bulgaria, Hungary, Jugoslavia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Russia. There are also very useful chapters on the Tungus event, and the strange occurrence at Robozero in 1663, when "from the clearest of skies a great fire descended."

STRANGE UNIVERSE - A Sourcebook of Curious Astronomical Observations. Volume A1. Compiled and published by William Corliss; pp279; $7.95; ISBN 0 9600712 7 X. -- being the latest in the laudable Sourcebook Project and indispensible to anyone seriously interested in Fortean matters, or the history of ideas and discoveries. This volume establishes categories ranging through the planets, to

astronomical bodies of all kinds, including comets, meteors, 'Planet X', and the enigmatic objects seen floating around solar space (and which we call 'Vulcans' after Fort). Other aspects of astronomy-based controversy are also given their own sections: meteorite biology, myths and legends that seem to indicate real events, cosmic rays, gravity and relativity experiments, and the early (almost unbelievable) discussions of Bode's Law that appears to govern the distribution of the planets. The Sourcebooks are building nicely. I cannot over-estimate their value, especially in the future, when many of these critical sources will become generally unavailable in libraries.

I believe the second volume in the Strange Phenomena series, G2, has been published, and a new series Strange Life (biology) will be launched with its first vol. very soon, in turn to be followed by G3 and M2, the second in the Strange Artifacts series. Such endeavours are worthy of your support. Sourcebooks and further info are available from Corliss: Sourcebook Project, Glen Arm, MD21057, USA.

VIOLENT UNIVERSE by Nigel Calder. Omega pb; 90p; illos; 160pp; ISBN 0 8600 7720 9.

First published by the BBC in 1969, this review of modern cosmology has been brought up to date with additional material.

THE MAGIC OF URI GELLER by James Randi.

Ballantine Books pb; pp320; 65p. Randi has a feud on with Geller, and here discloses clever sleight-of-hand methods for achieving 'Geller effects' - which of course does not prove that Geller uses the same method.

STOP PRESS: as we put this ish together, the papers are full of the news that a team from Boston Academy have substantial proof of the monsters in Loch Ness. A symposium will be held in Edinburgh in December when all will be revealed. We'll cover it in the next issue.

Did You See...?

Reader's Digest, Oct 75 — 'Science Bends its mind to Uri Geller' by John Fuller; 'In Search of Noah's Ark' by Gordon Gaskill; 'Francis - A Saint for Today' by Ernest Hauser.

'Stone Axe Boom in the Bronze Age' an educated guess at ancient economics. Duetscher Forschungsdienst, Vol xiv (1975), p12.

'Plant "Primary Perception" - Electro -physiological unresponsiveness to Brine Shrimp Killing' by KA Horowitz, DC Lewis & EL Gasteiger. Fairly self-explanatory, if you followed that ruckus about whether a girl was being cruel to shrimps. An extension of Backster's experiments - measuring plant responses to killing shrimps. Science vol 189 (1975).

"Did Chinese Cosmology anticipate Relativity?" by John Gribbin. Nature vol 256, Aug 1975.

"Radiation Field Photographs" by Robin Frost. A general guide to DIY Kirlian photography. Amateur Photographer, 1 Oct 75, pp108-110.

"The Glozel Affair" by ET Hall — a summary of the controversy surrounding the thermoluminescence method of dating archeological plunder. Nature, vol 257, 2 Oct 75.

"A Megalithic Observatory on Dartmoor" by JE Wood & A Penny. Nature, vol 257, 18 Sept 75.

"The Year of the Shark" by Paul Betts — stories & photos of killer sharks and their victims (some of whom survived); including a summary of the enigmatic 'Shark Arm Murder' which rocked Sydney, Australia, when the only clue to an underworld murder was a tattooed arm found whole in a shark's belly. Yukk! Observer magazine, ? Aug 75.

"There were Fairies at the bottom of the Garden" — an interview by Walter Clapham with Elsie Wright & Frances Griffiths (now elderly ladies) who were the central figures in the controversy over the 'Cottingley Photos' which to this date (they were taken in 1917) have not been proved fakes, and purport to show 'real' fairies that the girls met in a local glen. This is a valuable reference because it sheds additional light on the background and motivation of the girls at the time. Woman, 25 Oct 75.

"Fabulous Animals" — a David Attenborough TV series on BBC 1 (Fridays 5pm) on mermaids, unicorns, yetis and dragons. An article on the programme, "Man, Myth & Monsters" by Adrian Bailey, appears in Radio Times 8 Nov 75.

"Riddle of the Pampa" — excellent photos of the Nazca lines, Peru (by Loren MacIntyre) accompany an article and interview (by Bruce Chatwin) with Maria Reiche, who has worked nearly 40 years on charting and preserving the lines. As we go to press, the Sunday Times, 16 Nov 75, relates tnat a Britisher, Julian Knott, is to take part in a balloon ascent to probe the theory that this is how the pre-Incas carried out these fantastic designs. News has reached us, too, of an exhibition of Maria Reiche's photos - we shall keep you informed. Chatwin & MacIntyre's exposition can be found in Sunday Times Magazine, 26 Oct 75.

New Scientist: 2 Oct - 'New Evidence for the Flood'confirms Plato's date of 11,600 years ago, not from the Med area but from drilling core samples in the Mexican Gulf,which show that a glacial surge about then raised the sea levels dramatically; the 'Flurocarbon File' reviews the study and effects of the gasses that threaten with cancer-risks and depletion of the Ozone-layer vital to our survival *** 16 Oct -'Bent Metal - or Children' news on the latest kids tested on bending metal sealed into tubes, and how the kids can cheat..but do they really? *** 23 Oct - 'Is Monoceros X-1 a Black Hole?'; and John Gribbin asks 'White

Holes - A Coming Fashion?' *** 4 Nov - Studies reveal that rainfall in South Africa comes in cycles of 3-4, 10-12, & 16-20 years. Even more interesting is the statement that different geographical areas have different periodicities (which confounds the obvious theories.) *** 13 Nov - 'In Search of the Biological Clock', something that regulates all the rhythms of growing things; Dr Roger Levin reports on an International convention on the present state of our knowledge and search.

LANTERN, the journal of the Borderline Science Investigation Group (BSIG), No11 Autumn 1975. Contains a special report on UFOs over Aldeby, East Anglia -- part 3 of MW Burgess' study of 'Mysterious Stones'-- Ron Hill on 'Bio-rhythms' -- another spook from the 19th century -- and roundup of latest UFOs & ghosts. Price 12p, annual sub is 70p. BSIG have also published a booklet, "Haunted Lowestoft", available for 40p. Write to the Editor, Ivan Bunn, 3 Dunwich Way, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 4RZ.

SPECTRUM, a quarterly journal of the Occult. No 8 contains a review of the 'arts' tnat comprise 'The Occult' - editor Mike Howard exploding some myths of Black Magic warfare - articles on the Runic Tradition, the modern occult movement, divination, and a report on the annual conference of the Astrological Association. Single issues 35p - annual sub £1.40. Cheques/POs payable to M.A. Howard: 18A Church Hill, Purley, Surrey CR2 3QN. NB: new address, prices and schedule.

After a noticeable absence due to a marketing dispute, FATE is back on the British newsstands - in a large format UK-edition with major articles from the US-edition. The First issue (Nov 75) deals with the Bermuda Triangle Hoax theory (of Larry Kuche), Avebury (James Dyer), the reality of UFOs as machines (Frank B Salisbury), and a 'Prehistoric Alphabet' (George Wagner). One sad omission is Curtis Fuller's rambling Fortean news column, which for me was one good reason for buying FATE. 25p per copy, from most newsagents.

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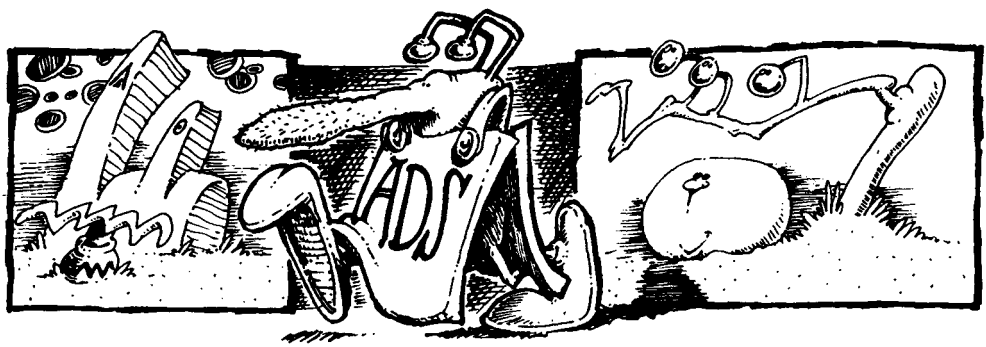
Compilation credits: Phil Ledger, Steve Moore, and Mum. Please send us a note of anything interesting that you come across.



Dr WB Crow, author of A History of Magic, Witchcraft & Occultism (amongst other works) is offering special tuition to a limited number of students in the following subjects: Kabalah; Tarot; Depth Psychology; Crown and Chivalric Symbolism; Church Symbolism; The Holy Grail; Astrological Symbolism; Oriental Religions (Brahminism, Buddhism, Taoism, Ancient Egyptian); Druidism; Atlantis and other lost civilisations.

Dr Crow was not only intimately acquainted with Dr CG Jung, but was analysed for some years by Jung's English assistant Dr Baynes, and was also privileged to write the reports of Dr Jung's Summer Schools in England and circulated to those attending (see p44 of Contact With Jung, edited by Michael Fordham.) Dr Crow gives tuition in the above subjects, especially Depth Psychology, including Jung's so-called Zurich School, more precisely known as Analytical Psychology.

If you're interested, please write to: Secretary for Tuition.
78 Broadmead Road, Woodford Green, Essex. or phone 01 504 9953.

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CONTACT-UK are holding their Annual General Meeting and London Lectures on Dec 6th, 2.30 to 10.00pm, at Caxton Hall, Caxton St, London. Although the Meeting is for members only, the public are invited to attend the lectures at 30p per head, commencing at 5.30pm. The speakers will include the Hon. Brinsley Le Poer Trench, and Prof John Taylor (who'll have films and slides).

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We heard from Brad Steiger who is compiling a book on experiences of fairies and other so-called elementals. "I have never forgotten that night in my childhood when I lay in bed and watched out of the window in fascination as a small man in a conical hat stood on his tip-toes to another window and watched my parents move about in the kitchen of our Iowa farmhouse. After several moments the little man must have felt a sensation of

someone watching him, for he turned to peer at me over his shoulder. I was able to get a good look at his tiny, pinched features in the light from the kitchen window. He smiled and shook his head. I'm not certain what happened next, but it seemed that his face came closer to my own. And then he simply disappeared.

"I am able to discuss this experience quite intellectually and "explain" it in approved psychological terms. I am prepared to regard the episode as the single most vivid dream of my childhood. At the time, though, I was convinced that I had seen a brownie or an elf - and I guess, regardless of my façade of sophistication toward the matter, I still believe that is precisely what I saw.

"I have since met many adult men and women who have privately admitted that they have seen "little people". Perhaps we comprise a rather unique secretive society, but I suspect that there are thousands of people who are "closet believers" in fairies, elves, and other nature spirits.

"I am gathering data and case histories of men and women who have seen the wee folk and/or who have interacted with them on various levels of consciousness. If you, or your readers, have had such an experience and would like to share it for publication, please contact me at your earliest convenience."

Well - your editor's experience is singularly devoid of having little men peer at him -- but those of you with tales to tell can write to Brad , care of Other Dimensions Inc, 104½ Washington St, Decorah, Iowa 52101, USA .

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WARK -- a magazine that reviews the Fantasy fanzines, and key reading if that's your bag. Copies can be had for 25p (20p to British Fantasy Society members), or free in return for usable letters or contributions. Rosemary Pardoe is your capable editrix, and can be contacted at 24 Othello Close, Hartford, Huntingdon PE18 7SU.

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L'ETA' DELL' ACQUARIO a magazine devoted to the spiritual philosophies of the 'New Age' put out by Bernardino del Boca and edited by Edoardo Bresci. Unfortunately, it's all in Italian, but I can say it is distinctly Theosophical. Signor Boca is compiling the second edition of an INTERNATIONAL GUIDE TO THE AGE OF AQUARIUS which will list magazines and other publications, groups and movements, study groups and university courses, organisations, personalities -- a general cultural guide to the study, experimentation, research and implementation of spiritual philosophy in the New Age. All interested should write to Bernardino del Boca: Viale Monza 40, 20127 Milano, Italy. He is also keen, he tells me, to find an agent for the Guide in England.

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THE NEWS is available from the following bookshops, who also keep a wide range of titles on Fortean and associated topics.

ANDROMEDA BOOK Co Ltd.
57 Summer Row, Birmingham B3 1JJ.

THE ATLANTIS BOOKSHOP.
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COMPENDIUM BOOKS.
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DARK THEY WERE & GOLDEN EYED.
10 Berwick St, London W1V 3RG.

TEMPS FUTURS.
3 rue Perronet, 75007 Paris, France.

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"Most of the orthodox theories of the cosmos are collapsing. I would suggest that the universe is like a pair of trousers, in which we, and all the visible stars are in one leg, and the unknown parts, into which matter can collapse through a black hole, are in the other."
- Prof Yuval Ne'eman, Tel Aviv University. Quoted in 'Weekend', 14-20 Oct 1970.

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Liu ling (221-300AD), one of the seven Taoist 'Sages of the Bamboo Grove' famed for their perpetual inebriation, was in the habit of going about his house naked. Once, his perambulations were interrupted by some stuffy Confucians, come to consult him. They expressed surprise at his lack of trousers. Liu replied: "The whole universe is my house and this room is my trousers. What are you doing here inside my trousers?"

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"Come unto me, and I shall make you fashionable. I conceive of nothing, in religion, science or philosophy, that is more than the proper thing to wear, for a while."
- Charles Fort.